(d) So far, no negotiations between India and Nepal have been held regarding the route to be permitted by Nepal.

Non-availability of data regarding export of handloom products

1741. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that separate export data for the export of handloom products is not available from the year 2003-2004 due to the absence of separate ITC (HS) codes for them;

(b) if so, the reasons for removal of separate ITC codes for the handloom products; and

(c) what is the view of the handloom sector on this?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The revised ITC (HS) Codes adopted by the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance have been formulated for the textile items as a whole without any sectoral classification such as mill made, powerloom and handloom etc.

(c) Separate ITC (HS) codes for Handloom products are essential for segregation of trade data for Handlooms which will help formulate product specific and market specific promotion strategies for Handlooms. The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has already taken up the matter and has been constantly pursuing with the Ministry of Finance for allotment of separate ITC codes for the handloom products so as to facilitate monitoring of export trends for augmenting export from the country.

Problems of power loom owners

1742. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that powerloom owners are facing many problems in the country specially in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any proposal/scheme to solve the problems of power loom owners in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) Powerloom industry in the country is very vibrant. There is no deterioration in the condition of the powerloom industry/owner in the country. The production in powerloom sector has been steadily increasing over the years and in 2004-05 the powerloom sector has produced 28705 million sqr. mtr. (provisional) of cloth which accounts for 63% of the total cloth production of the country. There has also been a steady increase in the number of looms installed in the State of Tamil Nadu as shown below:-

Year	No. of Looms registered	Employment (Anticipated)
2002-2003	320196	800490
2003-2004	334372	835930
2004-2005	365797	914493

(c) and (d) The Government seeks to promote powerloom sector through the following Schemes throughout the country including the State of Tamil Nadu:—

(i) Powerloom Service Centres (PSCs), established to provide various services, such as skill Upgradation and testing facilities to powerloom weavers, have been upgraded with modem looms, other machinery and equipment to improve the quality of services and facilitation for modernisation under the Plan Scheme Modernisation and Strengthening of Powerloom Service Centres.

(ii) To facilitate the creation of new designs, improve the designs and production in the fast changing global tradition in fashion, the Computer Aided Design (CAD) Centres were set up at 17 major powerloom clusters. Government provides financial support to these Centres at a fixed rate of Rs. 6.75 lakh per annum under the Plan Scheme Support to Computer Aided Design Centres.

(iii) A Group Insurance Scheme has been implemented to provide cover to the powerloom workers against unforeseen death, accident and disability.

(iv) With a view to improve the working environment and enable the powerloom workers in obtaining higher productivity, Government has implemented a Group Workshed Scheme. This Scheme provides subsidy for construction of worksheds limited to 25% of the unit cost of construction subject to a maximum of Rs. 80/-per sq. fit. In order to improve other infrastructure facilities the scheme envisages a link with the Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS), which provides Central assistance for improving critical infrastructure in existing or emerging textile centres.

(v) For modernisation of powerloom sector, a programme for induction of 50,000 shuttleless and for 2.50 lakh semi automatic and automatic looms in the decentralised powerloom sector has been announced. Incentives have been made available under the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) whereby the powerloom owner can reduce the cost of borrowing capital either by availing 20% Credit Linked Subsidy or by obtaining 5% interest reimbursement on the loan availed.

Decline in export of oil meals

1743. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether export of oil meals declines by 34 per cent in the first quarter;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main reasons for decline in exports is increased production in major competing countries and increased consumption in the domestic market leading to lesser availability of oil meals for exports.